

Our first year in our new facility had been absolutely incredible! From our opening service August 24, 2003 until today, Labor Day weekend September 2004, we continue God's journey. Rev. Tony Matthews jogged the mile from our home at the corner of Ohio and Chestnut to our new home on West Highway 40. The torch that he carried will always burn brightly at this precious place as we continue to declare our Vision, "Sharing God's Light". Our year of preparation took us many times to this hallowed ground for prayer, communion, and even prayerful signatures signed on the floor beneath our feet on this special day.

In this last year we have accomplished so many goals. We have averaged 400 in Sunday Worship throughout the year. Wednesday night Family worship had truly blossomed averaging 150 people each week. Resources had been set aside to always have a Praise Team and Youth Director on Staff. Our ministry must be to the aged and young on a constant basis. Our mission must be local as well as across the Seas. This last year we spent almost \$20,000 sending 14 missionaries to Honduras. These resources came from our missionaries as well as our church where we ministered in a dental unit, medical unit, and build a new church. We continued to give \$25,000 to United Methodist missions and \$10,000 to Missions set by our mission committee per year.

We have placed our Bell Tower from the Ohio Street facility right at the entrance of our new sanctuary. A children's playground has been purchased and a toddler playground outside our nursery. We have a basketball goal behind our facility that is readily used by our 30-40 young people who use our Worship Center weekly. Our United Methodist Men have renamed themselves the "Men's Ministry" and moved their meeting time to the evenings to attract the working men. Our ladies continue to lead us in so many forms of mission and ministry.

Our sanctuary had already been used in a number of ways for our community in the form of weddings, chorales, funerals. The High School Baccalaureate, Middle School graduation, United Methodist District meeting, Ministerial Association meetings and many other activities.

Our Narthex has been graced by two beautiful wood inlays from Mr. Jim Bell. This first is the scene of the Lord's Supper and second will be revealed at our Christmas Cantata Service on December 19th. Our Comfort Room has been specially decorated to bring every need to a Bride and for a child that needs to rest from the worship service. Each one has truly blessed us as our worshipping community has the opportunity to come together in the sight of our Lord. This coming year we are excited as we plan for our first "Pumpkin Patch" where we will have opportunities to meet and bless new people and sell them a pumpkin. We will probably see faces that we first met when we had our "Celebrate Jesus". We opened our church to the entire community to come have a block party with us. Hundreds attended that grand day. Christmas Eve brought a packed house this year as our children blessed us with a play and a Candlelight Service. We are presently looking at ways to enhance our Youth Ministry regarding our facility. We have 14 acres behind us that simply await the Lord's artistic hand to create new ministries, church, as an acronym "Christ Hopes U R Coming Home," is being experienced seven days a week in this, your Home. May God be praised for all He continues to do in our very midst.

Eddie Fulford



Building A New Church

“Build a new church!” You can imagine my concern and excitement as I was told about Dunnellon First United Methodist Church looking into relocating. I had just been appointed to serve this charge of the Florida Annual Conference in January 1997. Here it is April of 2002 and we have recently held our ground breaking ceremony, all papers signed, and work beginning on the new 20 acre lot located on CR-40 across from Voigt Springs. We are still in the city limits, which was a powerful desire for the church. The building committee had been formed in 1994 to research growth, expansion, possible relocation and basically what to do with all the info that would come in. That early committee did an inspiring job of gaining information and then making a presentation to the Charge Conference (a yearly meeting with the District Superintendent) of 1994. But the story doesn't really start there. In 1885 a community of Methodist's began gathering at Rockwell in Dunnellon for religious services. It's interesting that our new location is only about 1/2 mile west of the original fellowship. In these last 117 years, the church has mostly resided at 11818 Ohio St. and even though no longer holding the oldest sanctuary in town, we still are the oldest congregation. We have been served by pastors in this venture but according to those that have been here at least twenty years, the ball started rolling for blessed growth by the return of Rev. Eldon Simmons to serve our church from 1981-85. Rev. Simmons had been an early pastor of our church in 1948-49 going from there to serve many churches in Florida as well as District Superintendent of Orlando District. He returned in 1981 and set the wheel in motion to bring younger pastors into our leadership. Rev. Bruce Jones served 1985-92, Rev. Harold Hendren served 1992-97 and Rev. Eddie Fulford is now in his sixth year. These extended stages by our last four pastors say so much about the sweet fellowship here at Dunnellon. When our ministers have felt blessed to stay extended years, this has to be one of the best churches in the Florida Annual Conference. I'm proud to be in my sixth year. The family of God has brought so much warmth and love to my family. We are so proud to be appointed here at this time in the church's growth and relocation.

In the early years of expansion, hours upon hours were spent in planning, questioning, and seeking direction from our growth. Those around our present location in the historic section of Dunnellon did not prove to meet our needs. As those doors closed we began to look outside our present piece of property. It was very clear our desire would be to stay within Dunnellon City limits. In 1994 a new United Methodist church had been formed. The congregation of around 50 were meeting in the Citrus Springs Middle School. Those doors were closed down in 1997 and was

explained to us in the district as not a failure only that it had been a failure of time. We as a denomination tried too late to present a church in Citrus Springs after their main growth had occurred in previous years. To our north is the Rainbow Lakes United Methodist Church and the general rule of our denomination is to not have a church within 5 miles of another United Methodist Church. To our East on State Rd. 484 many congregations have moved their location but this is outside our city limits. The committee looked at every location they could find within the local downtown area even the old middle school but these considerations did not fit the picture we were looking for. We needed at least five acres and hoped for more. We found land available west of our present location available.

Excitement formed as we looked to what was for sale on West Hwy 40 still in our City Limits. South of Hwy 40 was an area for sale that seemed to offer us exactly what we wanted. After a study was made we realized that a considerable amount of that land could not be used. We then looked to the north of Hwy 40 still within the city limits, west of Oak Bend Village. There was some concern from a few folks in Oak Bend about this noise problem of our new construction but with the knowledge that we were actually bringing 10 acres between them quieted that concern. The rectangular shaped property would be adequate for our endeavor but because of its shape and small front to Hwy 40 it was decided it would be much better if we had more land to the west of us. To the west was a 40 acre tract of planted pines. This happened to be owned by Mrs. Geneava Bernkik. Mrs. Bernkik's mother is the one who had given us our beautiful stained glass window in our sanctuary. Her daughter, Geneava, blessed us with 6 new stained glass windows for our new church. A call was made and after many meetings for approval, we bought 10 of the 40 acres from Mrs. Bernkik, this now gave us a parcel of 20 acres. It is now all zoned for the church use.

The building committee met on a continual basis to insure that "what we believed to be our god given dream" would come true. We were blessed to have one of our members front the money for both parcels of land. As we paid back this individual, they in turn donated the interest back to the church. It is moments like that, that truly help us realize we are heading in the right direction. Two of the main reasons that we as a church have continued to along at such a good speed has been through the hard work of our two building chairman: Mr. Joe Farley and Mr. Fred Kingery. These two men have truly been visionaries for our church always looking down the road to future ministry and expansion.



I can honestly say that without their continued leadership and support of their endearing wives we would not be where we are today. They represent the many long hours that this great crew of Godly men and women have given to our Lord Jesus Christ.

I must take a moment now and mention that while those plans were coming alive there was a growing concern about the speed of this plan. As I mentioned, the dream was anchored in 1994 but now the year was 1998-1999 and how could we pay for such an adventure. Around this time, Mr. Jack Bergstrom who with his lovely wife Audrey, worked at our church in the winter months, came to my office. Jack said that he was looking for ways to spend his time in service to God and his church. Little did Jack know that what was on my heart was not painting doors but heading a tremendous financial campaign for us to see if we could support of growing endeavor. When I found out that Jack's past career was perfect for what we needed a church for a church financing building fund, we just couldn't let him go. Jack, from then on, spent so much time in planning and preparation for this great need. A committee for him was designated and in January of 2000 we kicked off an incredible professional pledge campaign with two donors and special invitation to all members. Jack's creativity in this cannot be matched as he blended the past and present to encourage our giving. Beautiful brochures that are included were given out to each and everyone. Mr. Howard Carpenter, our financial secretary kept all our records and within a few months we had pledges and were receiving giving units to the Building Fund. This was a three year pledge with intent to make a decision in the

3rd year to move forward. These gifts were factored over a 3 year period and would allow us to make payments if we ventured into a loan of \$10,900 a month.

During the summer months Mrs. Linda Jones was nominated to creatively keep the ball rolling when Jack would return to the North. Linda created out of 30 gallon gasoline can a figure of Miss Anita Penny where people could drop their loose change in for the building fund. Linda had also chaired for us on yearly Jubilee celebration in the Fall starting in 1998. We have a fall flea market, silent auction on the following day is our honoring services at the grounds. Each year we have raised between 5 and 10 thousand dollars for our building fund.

This annual celebration has given us many laughs like the one when a horse was into our sanctuary where he had a slight accident. One year we had a series of skits in preparation for Jubilee that included a feud between our Hat Fields and the McCoys. The list goes on and on.

We all enjoy dressing up like the turn of the 20th Century and thoroughly enjoy having one service under the big tent on that Sunday morning. We usually average close to 300 people on that day. All of these events bless us spiritually as well as keeping an eye upon the need for finances to fund the new facility. The Jubilee for the year 2002 is now being planned. We will use our own people, their talents and skills this year instead of bringing in great leaders. So many of our members have an outstanding job leading us on these Jubilee programs but I would be amiss if I did not mention a special thanks to Mrs. Ida Tacker and her group of folks that meet throughout the year making crafts for the Jubilee Celebration.



The Fulford Family



Eddie Fulford



Another big contributor to this program is the Flea Market that is functioning at the same time. We give a special thanks to Mrs. Flo Pohlman for her helpers and all their hard work. Flo has also been the chair of our Missions Committee over the last couple of years. They have presented to our congregation a monthly list usually done in such creative ways, mission programs that we have graciously given to. There is no doubt we have an outstanding congregation that believes in giving to others.

As the months began to roll by we were all amazed at the way our giving continued to grow. Not only were we holding steady with funds for our Building Fund but our General Fund was truly growing by leaps and bounds. This plus a couple of other interesting situations developed that led us to speed up our Building process. Our attendance continued to blossom at this time as well. Parking continued to be a major problem. Three Sunday morning worship services were being offered to try and meet the growing needs. Looking at all that was going on, knowing that whenever we decided to build we would have at least a year of construction also knowing that statistics show that new churches usually grow at astounding rates as the doors are opened.

I called a special meeting of all those that were on the Building Committee plus those on the "Building Fund Raising" committee. Three suggestions were offered:

1. **We can decide not to build.**
2. **We can wait 3 years to see where we are financially and then decide to build or not. This was the period of time listed for the Fund Raising Campaign.**
3. **We can build now!**

Of course the question was raised of how we could achieve this 3rd step at the present time. We realized that the Florida Annual Conference at that time had the resources to loan us the money. Usually they did not have the reserves and probably would not have them in the future. We also had learned that by moving 25% of our General Fund over to the Building Fund we could still operate our budget easily plus have enough resources to make our monthly loan payments. This third plus was that we were at a time in our nations economics that we could get a loan at an incredible low interest rate.

After much discussion our combined committees agreed to pray for a month and then make a decision. One month later the group was ready to go if the church voted to allow the 25% to go for the Building Fund. The church overwhelmingly approved this and the light was green! Fred and I made the visit to our District Committee on Church Relocation. The committee was so impressed

with our homework and growth that they unanimously gave us permission to seek a loan for construction. Meetings, meetings, and more meetings followed. Our dear folks continued to give of their time, resources, and efforts. The dream that our miniature church model displayed was actually going to happen and happen soon. We kept this model for a number of months to continue to excite our congregation. Mr. Earl Hausman made this for us and it will be a treasure for the archives of our church. Research was done for comparison in local and distant banks regarding a loan that could be obtained from the Florida Conference. By the time we were able to get all our paper work done we found that the Conference had already put out the monies we were seeking. Their process leaves them open to first come first served. The best offer that we received and the one we applied for was from our own Dunnellon State Bank. We have kept our church resources there for many a year. They offered us a 1.5 million dollar loan at 5.9% interest. This could go up by two percent per year for three years. The highest this would be was 11.9%. Our finance committee gave the approval as did our Administrative Board. Our first full payment of \$10,900 a month will be made in May of 2003. Presently after the first eight months of 2002 we are averaging \$11,500 per month in the Building Fund. We noted that we have spent \$450,000 as of August 2002 before the bank loan kicked in.

In the process of signing for this loan we realized that since we are an incorporated body our Board of Directors chairperson and trustee chairperson had to both sign our legal papers. Mr. Larry Slaughter has served as chairperson of the trustees for the last couple of years and has been so faithful to this task. Mr. Carrol Meredith has been our Administrative Chairman for many years and his constant tedious insight to the workings of our church and this process has been greatly appreciated. Carrol's advice on the Administrative level into the needs of our facility had helped. I cannot tell you the hours and I mean hours that Carrol, myself, Sharon and others have planned and strategized about our growth. The coffee pot at our church office has been worked over many times as we discussed and discussed. Prayers were constantly lifted up by our faithful for this door to be opened and others closed. In this process, we saw the need to lift Mrs. Sharon Gane's position from secretary to Administrative Assistant. She has excelled in this position, calmed many nerves in a zillion transactions, and honestly helped our church continue forward with a loving, smiling manner. Sub-committee reports were kept in our records over the years by Fred. Each committee was charged to research, held our budget or plan ways to cover extra expenses and report such at a certain date.

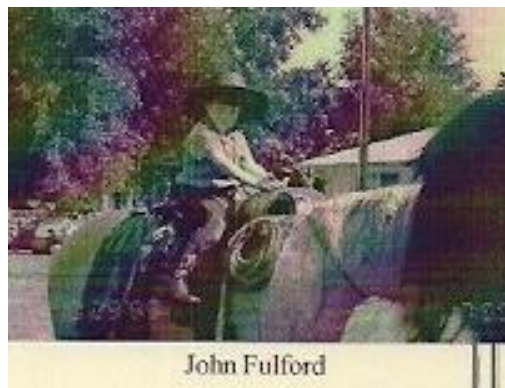
A "Thank You" to all chairpersons who assisted in all areas of our building process. Listed below are just a few of our chairpersons:

Mrs. Grace Burks: Stained Glass Committee
Mr. Carrol Meredith: Pews and chapel furniture ~ Mr. Ken Kouba
Mrs. Elaine Carter: Sound system/phone/chapel furniture
Mr. Al Martinez: Landscaping and Memorial garden
Mr. Joe Farley: Steeple/sign
Mrs. Linda Fagan - Mrs. Les Risley: Color/Flooring Committee
Mr. Bob Van Stee
Mrs. Kathy Klein: Kitchen Accessories



Each committee was composed of a number of our church family. Hours of research and work was offered. Our Administrative Board was held in August 2002 to compose these commissions. Their reports were wonderfully received by our church and voted into approval status. This meeting was held one day after our called church conference to decide whether or not to sell our present facility. Our new District Superintendent chaired this meeting we unanimously charged our Trustees and Board of Directors to pursue selling our present church. Mr. Ron Wright was given chair of approaching those that might be interested in our lot. Three churches have presently showed interest. Our professional appraisal set one value of our present location at \$475,000.

We have been especially blessed through this process by our official photographer, Mr. Horace Mann. Horace has kept an ongoing set of photos of our building events. These have been placed in our newsletter as well as our bulletin boards. Every effort has been made to keep all of our church family abreast of our progresses. Prayer walks have been offered for us to prayerfully walk around our new facilities. One new school with Holy Communion. We offer a special thanks to Mrs. Linda Reynolds for scheduling these for us.



Our last Jubilee/Homecoming from the old Sanctuary site was held November 2002. Around 325 people enjoyed our friendly service and our pastor rode in on Freddie the Mule. Freddie had been publicized all month in preparation for Jubilee. Signs covered the church, is Freddie ready for Freddy. Amy Gregory brought Freddie to us and on Saturdays count Fair, many children and adults had the chance to ride him. This marked our fifth year of Jubilee which has given us money for our Building Fund.

Watching three facilities come into existence has been a church wide dream come true. We have continues to have special meetings along each step of the way to make sure that no stone is left unturned. He was received special financial gifts in 2002 to cover special projects or this program. By November 2002 we received:

Kitchen Stove: \$5,700
Stained Glass: \$17,400
S/S Room: \$14,000
Steeple: \$8,200
Nursery: \$650
Property Appraisal: \$1,200
Church Pews: \$29,684
Choir Chairs: 1,420
Alter Rail: \$2,312

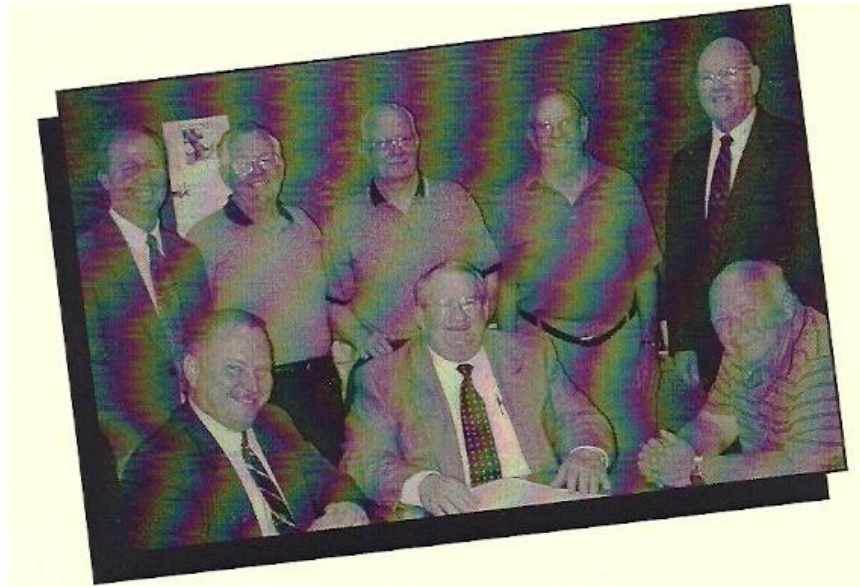
New Organ: \$25,000

We have continued to have a regular monthly giving to the building fund of between \$10,000 and \$15,000. This has been received since January of 2001.

The church Board offered giving our new kitchen excellent materials for the ladies and to use. Mrs. Kathy Klein gave this report in October of 2002. The color and flooring committee have spent hours researching what will be best for us as has the church/sound committee. A retractable screen will be placed in front of our stained glass windows for all the glory service and other times when needed. The same company who placed our windows in the previous church is moving the window to the new church. One of these will be in the Sanctuary and two in the chapel. A wish list has been given to our church including:

1. Portable stage or hall estimate \$7500
2. Memorial Garden
3. Power point projector/computer for Sanctuary \$10,000
4. Youth Building
5. New Piano
6. Exercise Track
7. Prayer Walk
8. This Church Building story is a work in progress

Building A New Church

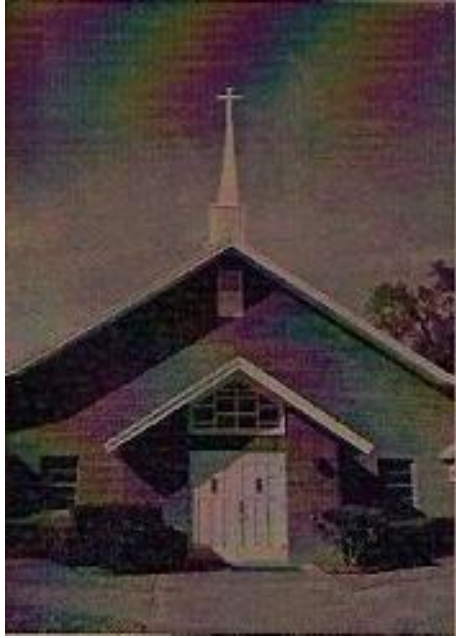


Building Executive Committee Signing Our Mortgage

Sharing God's Light



Our People's Vision Made Manifest
"A Mountain-Top Experience Since 1885"





First United Methodist Church History 2003-2008

Since entering our new facility in the year of our Lord 2003, many missions and ministries have birthed and grown to maturity. A listing of those that started these services will help in our everyday calling as Gods' family as we seek to continue to grow in His grace.

Sundays find us worshipping in three different modes with 8:00 a.m. being a weekly communion blended style of worship. Our Lay Leaders and Administrative Assistant with our Liturgist and Organist lead the hour. In our new facility, the sound room is an active part of our worship. Mrs. Carol Stroub ministers there. The doors are always open and everything ready to worship by Mr. John Jones. Our appointed Senior Pastor rotates each Sunday, with four other leaders of our congregation sharing the three Sunday Sermons preaching schedule. They are Rev. Tony Matthews, Rev. Bob Weimert, Mrs. Sherri Woodstuff and Mrs. Bonnie Russell. On the fifth Sunday, Mr. Don Holsipple joins the team and Mrs. Debbie Wright fills in during the year as needed. These six individuals meet monthly with our Senior Minister this group is called the CLOMS. (Certified Lay and Ordained Ministers.)

The 9:30 a.m. service begins our Contemporary style of worship. Over the years, we have had many leading the worship. Presently Mr. Mike Kirk, Mrs. Debbie Wright, Ms. Michelle McClain and Ms. Rachel O'Brien, join the Pastor to lead this service. Most of our young families attend this weekly worship. There is always a children's time in the service and then they are dismissed to go to Sunday School. Mrs. Lija Kirk and Mrs. Nancy Fulford share this children's class. On the first Sunday

of the month all share communion and then the children go to their classes. Mrs. Leslie Risley and Mrs. Betty Perlmutter serve communion at the 9:30 hour, while Pastor Bob anoints those with oil at the altar for healing. We have quarterly rotating teams that set the communion for 8:00 (Mr. & Mrs. Jim Bell, Mr. & Mrs. Bill Fagan, Mr. & Mrs. Pat Anguilio and Carol Crandall. Mr. Carroll Meredith and his mother, Juanita Meredith, set the communion for the 11:00 a.m. service.

Since we use the screen and sound system more fully at the 9:30 service, we have more activity there at 9:30. Mr. John Jones, Mr. Mike McClain, Mr. Travis Peebles. At 11:00, Mr. Ralph Levatino and Mr. Tom Laccone lead. Mr. Ralph Levatino and others have been a great help running the sound booth for Chairman John Jones for various weekly activities such as funerals and weddings.

At 11:00, our Liturgist, Choir Director Mr. Cory Stroup our church choir, and organist join our Pastor and worship leaders to lead us in our more traditional worship. The Pastor's robe at the 8 and 11:00 a.m. worship services. Mrs. Doris Burch sets our weekly liturgist and helps set our Psalter and sets the stewards for communion on Sunday, while our choir director sets our hymns. Mr. & Mrs. Wilbur Heath lead our weekly ushers for this service and combine with Mr. & Mrs. Hannington to lead the ushers for the 8:00 a.m. service. Each Sunday at 11:00, Mrs. Patti Purvis rotates with Mrs. Sharon Gane as our worship leaders.

Our office is open Monday thru Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m... Sharon Gane continues to lead our Staff as our Administrative Assistant. Mrs. Lin Roosa is our secretary working, Tuesday thru Thursday and Mrs. Grace Burks works Tuesday, Wednesday, and Friday as our Bookkeeper.

Through the week, Mr. John Jones serves on our Staff as our Facility manager and takes care of a variety of church needs. Rev. Bob Weimert has been our Visitation Pastor for some years now and continues to bless so many in his ministry. Pastor Eddie and Pastor Bob try to rotate days where they visit the hospitals, rehabs, and nursing homes. Mrs. Debbi Wright has felt a calling to volunteer in this ministry as well and helps tremendously in visitation. For 2008 as a trial program Mrs. Debbie Wright joins our staff as a Lay Visitor. Pastor Bob has moved to fill in as Pastor to Rainbow Lakes United Methodist Church.

On our present calendar, Mrs. Carol Stroub leads a "Disciple" class each Monday afternoon. She has led these series of classes that are approved by the United Methodist Church, a number of different times for our congregation. Disciple 1,2,3,4 is all in depth studies that encourage almost a year-long endeavor into the scriptures. Each Monday evening, Mr. Al Martinez leads a Bible Study, open to all, as a verse-by-verse Bible study. On Tuesday mornings, Mrs. Barbara Keller rotates with Rev. Bob Weimert for a Bible Study and each Tuesday evening at 6:00 p.m., Mr. Bob Wood leads a Bible Study (Spirit Builders) open to all. These two studies are in our Friendship Hall. Quarterly, Pastor Eddie shares for a month on different Biblical topics. Each Tuesday evening, after Spirit Builders, usually finds us in one of our Administrative Board meetings. Quarterly, our Youth Council meets on the first Tuesday of the month. Each month our Trustees meet on the Second Tuesday, third Tuesday is the Finance meeting. The last Tuesday has the Administrative Board meeting one month and the alternate month on the last Tuesday is our Council on Ministry meeting. We have great plans for 2008 as Mrs. Linda Jones become our new Council on Ministries Chairperson. Wednesdays and Saturdays at noon, we host the AA program that was started as a ministry here by Mr. Fred Ashmead. There is usually a day-long process on Wednesday in preparation for our evening family dinner. Mrs. Nancy Fulford has been leading this ministry for many years. The meal has grown from a dinner to help those in ministry on Wednesday nights - such as Choir and other programs, to a weekly fellowship time for an average of 125 to 175 people. Her son John and daughter Emily and a wonderful group of volunteers join Nancy. The meal is offered weekly at no charge, even though there is an offering received during the weekly worship service. We cannot list all the names of those that help make this family time come together, but we do offer our deep appreciation to Nancy and to Mr. Howard Carpenter and those who assist him in cleaning up the kitchen each Wednesday night. Mr. Carpenter is also our Finance Secretary and leads our counting team of Mrs. Leslie Risley and Mr. Earl Decker, who meet each Tuesday for hours upon hours to take care of our weekly offerings.

The meal is shared at 5:30 p.m. and then the children, youth, and nursery are dismissed for their programs at 6:00 p.m. Our Lay Leader, Mrs. Sherri Woodstuff, and Mr. Don Holsipple leading our

singing with Mrs. Joyce Gabel, our pianist, lead the adults in worship. We rotate our speakers weekly with our certified Lay Speakers, retired ministers, our Parrish Nurse, Mrs. Joey Weisbaum, and our Home Fellowship groups. Communion is set for us under Mrs. Doris Burch every six weeks. Pastor Eddie now leads a Parenting Class at this hour on the first and third Wednesdays of the month. At the present time Mrs. Debbi Wright and Mr. & Mrs. Travis Peebles lead our youth. Mrs. Dana Matthews takes charge of our children's ministry and Mrs. Millie Porter is in charge of our nursery. Our Staff for our nursery is led by Mrs. Judy Roseski and assisted by Mrs. Millie Porter. Following the worship service, our Chancel Choir meets with our Director Mr. Corey Stroup and Mrs. Joyce Gabel. We also have a Handbell Choir meeting for practice every Monday evening under the direction of Mrs. Marilyn Holsipple. We have a beautiful selection of Bells given to us by Mrs. Kathy Klein in memory of her deceased husband.

In the prayer Chapel on Wednesday nights, our Prayer Box Ministry team meets for prayer. This is open to all that would like to join. Mr. Charlie Skinner is our present Chairman for this prayer group. Prayer boxes have been placed throughout the community in businesses and are checked weekly to be prayed for. Our church secretary combines these requests and adds the prayer card needs that came in each Sunday through our offering plates. These combined needs for the month are typed out and placed in the Chapel for our church to pray.

We have seen a mighty out pouring of prayers answered in our church and we praise our Lord for this. We have now branched out to a time on the first Sunday of each month to have anointing oil as a symbol of the Holy Spirit on these communion Sundays. Mr. Don Holsipple and Mr. Fred Kingery are leading these individuals to bless our entire congregation believing in God's healing grace. We have already witnessed this with our Home Fellowship Group leading on several Wednesday nights and communion Sundays. Presently, we have a committee meeting to cover this new ministry of healing comprised of: Mr. Fred Kingery, Mr. Don Holsipple, Mrs. Lorna Gillespie, Mrs. Georgia Law, Mrs. Beverly Snyder, and Mrs. Linda Reynolds. Mrs. Reynolds has taken the worship lead of the Wednesday night prayer chapel ministry.

There is a group of men that meet under the direction of our Trustees and Men's leadership on Thursday mornings to do any work needed around our facility. One area for future ministry they are working on is preparing a "Prayer Walk Garden" directly behind our west parking lot. Located in this area is our, "Liberty Tree," dedicated on Labor Day Sunday 2007. We also have a group of men's fellowship that meet each Thursday at noon and on the last Thursday of the month they eat chicken at the church and Pastor Eddie gives devotion. The men's ministry is under the direction of an executive committee that meets quarterly. One group that meets every other Monday morning is called "Men on a Mission" Their outreach project is the Backpack ministry, where they share with other churches programs in the community to help feed hungry children on the weekend.

Our United Methodist Women's program has been under the leadership of Mrs. Pat Vitek for past three years. Mrs. Laura Rutkowski has been our Fall Festival Chairperson for the last couple of years and will become the new United Methodist Women's president. Presently, we have three women Circles, Naomi, Ruth, and Virginia that meet monthly. They are under the UMW executive committee. Events for all women are planned periodically. The outreach and mission giving of these women continues to be one of the strongest and most crucial ministries in our church family as well as the entire United Methodist Church connections.

Our facility is host for a number of ministries and programs throughout the year. These range from High School testing, Baccalaureate, line dancing on Tuesday, Square Dancing on Thursdays, AA group, Kiwanis Health Fair, etc. All programs fall under the Direction of the Trustees, who relate directly to the Administrative Board. To be on the agenda, please call the church office in advance of the regular scheduled meetings.

Sunday school is a major area of our growth as disciples of Jesus church. Mrs. Judy Capone is our Sunday School Superintendent. We have three adult classes at 9:30 a.m. under the leadership of Mr. Al Martinez, Mr. Bob Wood, and Mr. Tony Matthews (his class has a shared teaching scheduled.) Mrs. Lija Kirk and Mrs Nancy Fulford lead our children's class at 9:30 a.m. as well. At 11:00, Mr. Mike Kirk leads a youth class and Mr. Bill Gaunt directs an adult class. The children are allowed at this time to work in our computer lab under the direction of Mrs. Irene Bruch.

We are in our second year of "Home Fellowship Ministry." Over ten groups are meeting in homes throughout the month encouraging discipleship with a family atmosphere. Our church is thankful to Mr. Fred Kingery who brought this program to us and operates under a steering committee. Mr. David Priest is serving us this year with his wife Nancy in preparing our bi-monthly newsletter, "The Candle." David also changes our marquee sign on Highway 40 and gives us Christian inspiration in the thoughts he post.

Over the past few years we have had wonderful Evangelist, such as John Barret, Mr. John Riley, Dr. Chic Shaver and Rev. Charles Kinder, Mr. & Mrs. Joe Farley have chaired our Evangelism committee and done a tremendous job. Mr. Don Holsipple begins this Chair in 2008.

Mrs. Betty Ashmead is serving our church as our New Member Chairperson and putting together classes for new members three times a year. We welcome these new members with packets of information and a handmade wooden cross-built by Mr. Bob Burks. Bob has hand crafted over 600 of these crosses. Many of them adorn our new member homes. There is a new member dinner each fall. This process is a regular activity, we deeply appreciate the hard work here, and other areas of ministry noted.

Mrs. Leslie Risley continues to relay "called in prayer requests" on our e-mail prayer chain. She also leads our volunteers who help families for support for funerals, or a stay in the hospital. We try to provide a meal or coffee/cake after a funeral service.

This coming January, we will host our second talent show evening. Mrs. Carol Crandall leads us in this event, which was a tremendous success in the past.

Our vision for our Youth has grown over the years. Our Directors, since we have moved into our new facility, have been Amanda Fulford, Matthew Eldridge, Mike Kirk, Debbie Wright, Joy, and Travis Peebles. We bought the Vocational-Tech portable from the Marion Country School District for about \$1,000.00 in 2004 and moved it on to our property. The cost of moving was approximately \$17,000.00. A tremendous amount of work has gone into this building by so many, such as John Jones, Bob Burks our Directors and John Woodstuff installing the air conditioning and so many others.

It is presently used weekly for Sunday school and Wednesday for Youth programs. It contains a pool table, ping-pong table, refrigerator, microwave, meeting room, stage setup by Coach Jones and an incredible sound system/computer set up by Travis Peebles. We average 10-20 youth on any given Wednesday. We do want to give thanks to the many sponsors that have faithfully given \$10, \$20, \$50 a month for the past couple of years to our youth ministry. We hope someday to be set up to have other youth groups come and camp out at our facility. They could float down the Rainbow River and join us for worship on Sunday mornings.

Mrs. Joey Weisbaum was consecrated by our church a few years ago as our, Parrish Nurse." Her ministry, while she is still a full-time Hospice Nurse, is to provide regular education on medical and spiritual health. She usually takes one Wednesday night service per month and leads the program. Joey has also offered us a flu-shot clinic, blood mobile opportunities, seminars, etc. She is always on call to help us in our needs.

Mrs. Jackie Adley is the present Chairperson of our K.F.C. program. The "Klowns for Christ" share with our congregation the last Sunday of each month. They are also in ministry in and around our community for various events. Mrs. Lois Hill started this program for us 7 years ago.

We have been so blessed over the years during our Fall Festival. We started this program, which among many activities would always have a major "Flea Market Sale." Different ones have worked so hard on these events that have included "Pumpkin Patch" Jubilee Days, Craft Sales, Children's games, and ride etc. We started these events in 1997 to help raise funds for our future building which we reside in now.

Each Christmas and sometimes, at Easter, as well, our Chancel Choir gives us a wonderful Cantata and our Praise Team offers special music for these High Holy Days. On the Cantata Sunday Mrs. Nancy Fulford blesses the congregation by offering a "Sunday Christmas Brunch" to all from the Fulford family. She feels it is the Pastor's family way of giving back. There is usually "semi" cinnamon rolls, egg and sausage dishes, rolls, fruit salad and starbucks coffee. Mrs. Tiny Weimert has blessed us as well providing biscuits and jelly.

During the school season, Mrs. Ellen Zink has offered us on the last Sunday of the month our, "Java Jabber Hours." She, assisted by a few others, offers tons of cookies, coffee, and hot chocolate from 10:30 to 11:15 for fellowship and goodies.

Bob Wood, Jr. brought to our attention four years ago the great need we, as Christians, have to give to the mission needs of our world. Before this, Mrs. Flo Pohlman led us each year in many wonderful mission opportunities. Now we offer the congregation a "Faith Promise: that as we seek God to give us resources to mission, we will in turn give to him.

We now call this program, "Mission Promise." For the last few years, Mr. Al Martinez has led us in this endeavor. We support the Honduras Mission, African Mission, and Rural Missions in USA. We also, through our church giving, support the Gideon Ministry, Habitat for Humanity, and FCA mission. For 2008 our Mission Promise is \$50,000 plus. We also support all of our United Methodist Mission responsibilities at 100%. We gave \$30,000.00 plus to these missions in 2007.

We are so thankful for those that have worked so hard over the years to continue to fill service positions. We cannot even begin to express our appreciation for C.A. Dinkins, III who continues to serve our Lord faithfully as Treasurer.

Mr. Carrol Meredith continues to do an outstanding job in leading our Administrative Board as well as visiting our Administrative Committees to keep in touch with all the ministries of the church.

Mr. Tom Laccone has truly helped bring us into the media age. His constant improvements and creative expertise in updating our web page keeping us abreast of the many activities at FUMC. (www.sharinggodslight.com You can find Tom, his wife Aprille, Carroll, (mentioned above) Howard Carpenter and many other volunteers, with their "hands on" ministry in our kitchen on Wednesday night.

Mrs. Linda Jones has accepted the Chair of our new Council on Ministry. They meet the 1st Tuesday evening of every month. This group involves all ministry Chairs. As we plan for the immediate future and long range goals, we have decided that all ministries will flow through this agency for direction and guidance. Their most recent endeavor was "March Madness" where we gave \$20.00 sack lunches to those who came the first two Sundays in March 2008 as guests not having a church home. "Great Success!"

In March of 2008 we started a new children's Sunday school at 11:00 a.m. Under our Superintendent, Mrs. Judy Capone, volunteers will staff this new and exciting ministry as we continue to grow and expand.

FUMC Dunnellon could not run like a finely tuned engine without those who continue to lead our day to day ministries and administrations for our church body. We are so thankful to have, for the past 4 1/2 years, Mrs. Lin Roosa as our part-time secretary. Many times she has become full-time to take care of the needs of our family. Her dear husband, Jerry, has also served faithfully as head of our trustees for 2 terms. Both of these individuals continue to encourage a deeper walk among our believers by signing up folks to go to the District "Walk to Emmaus."

Mrs. Grace Burks started as data entry clerk when we switched over to "all computer." Grace has basically become our bookkeeper and has done a wonderful job bringing us into the 21st century.

Mrs. Sharon Gane continues, as she has for so many years, to connect all the many different dots of our church family. We all truly applaud her continued ministry to us as our Administrative Assistant. I have no idea where we would be without her creativity, inspiration, humor and true human kindness. As your pastor, let me say that I could not serve this great church without her in our church office.

My wife has given me a great inspiration, the possibility of all our leaders coming together, as much as possible, for a time of prayer and devotion. Starting July 1st. we are inviting all staff, members of CLOM, our Administrative Chairs, and Bible Study leaders to join. We believe this will enhance our vision of God for our personal lives and also the broader church. All are welcome to attend. We will call this program "The CAL" (Called Administrative Leaders). We will seek the Lord's vision for our church in the next few years. Our first meeting brought together thirty six leaders. PTL!

We are encouraging all of our leaders to connect their thoughts and visions on our Pastor's blog.

This can be linked to our web page. Twelve areas our church offers in ministry as we begin our next five year plan:

- 1) Four weekly Worship experiences.
- 2) Mission service outside our facility.
- 3) Youth, children activities.
- 4) Baptisms.
- 5) Weddings.
- 6) Funeral and Memorial services.
- 7) Visiting in homes and hospitals.
- 8) Mid-week studies.
- 9) Family nights.
- 10) Facilities used by outside sources.
- 11) Place for individual talents to be nurtured.
- 12) Finances given to needs in our community and the world.

“PAYING OFF OUR MORTGAGE”

July 2013: PTL, we burned the mortgage that we took out in 2003 for our twenty acres on west highway 40 to expand our facilities. We paid the twenty year loan off in ten years. That was absolutely amazing how our wonderful folks gave to this great ministry. Just a few years ago we bought an additional ten acres directly to the east of our property and adjacent to it.

From July 2013 to July 2014, our task force for expansion under the leadership of Elizabeth Letchworth met for 10 times and covered a vast array of our needs for the future. In the fall of 2014, small groups for planning and vision met with our pastor each Sunday and Monday. All together “139” persons shared their dreams and concerns. I am reminded of Psalm “139” which says that the Lord has a plan for us and will direct our paths.

Starting in January 2015 our new “Building Committee” convened under our chairperson, Elizabeth Letchworth. They continue the task force desires plus the information we gathered from our small “Fall Group” visionary meetings. They will plan how our church can expand in the future with a “United Journey Center” and look into “Senior Living” on our property. 2015 will be a busy and exciting year!

As I look back over the last decade, let me mention a few of the Saints that have helped us build this foundation of mission/ministry to the Dunnellon area: 2010 gave us two amazing ministries— “Forget Me Not” adult care led by Grace Burks and Joey Weisbaum. A solid group of volunteers meet every Tuesday from 12:30 to 4:30. Services are offered to our community for respite and elder care. At the same time Amy Simpson assisted by charter leaders Tracy Baldeo and Crystal Bass brought to us “Harmony Preschool” and daycare.

Our mission committee over the last few years has done an outstanding work averaging over \$100,000.00 given yearly to missions above our budget. A special thanks of appreciation is given to an outstanding committee, each person leading in their own amazing way. Chairpersons were formerly Tony Matthews and currently Carol Stroup. Members presently are Al Martinez, Rick DuCharme, Lloyd Fisk, Sharon Gane, Sherry and Terry Roberts, Pat Martin, Bill Lyon and Roxanne Barnes.

Over the years wonderful gifts have been given to our congregation to enhance the property’s beauty. Most recently two young men, for their Eagle Scout project, blessed us tremendously. Ryan Rowles erected a flagpole outside the main sanctuary adjacent to the bell tower. Bricks were placed around it in honor or memory of someone. Sammuel Dillion built an “archway” to our prayer garden for his project. He also placed many wooden signs with a rustic look along the prayer wall. Each sign has an engraved Bible verse relating to the “outdoors.”

We have been blessed by Fred and Margaret Brookshier for their continued hard work in maintaining our “prayer walk.” They have also given us the “Bullywink” part of the prayer walk and a type of outdoor worship center with an airbrush portrait of Jesus walking on the water.

Jim Bell is an artist within our congregation who has done an amazing number of beautiful scenes of the Bible. He uses his skill of “marquetry” to unravel the popular stories of Jesus. His work can be seen in the sanctuary and narthex.

We have also been thoroughly blessed by the wonderful gift Mrs. Geneva Bernik and her family gave to us in our stained glass window in the chancel area. This work captures the “Last Supper.” When we moved from the 1975 sanctuary to the 2003 sanctuary, we used the same stained glass artist to move our window. He and his team added two new windows on the west and east side of the sanctuary and two in the chapel. Mrs. Ruth Riley surprised us by giving us some of the leftovers of broken stained “gold” glass from the 1903 sanctuary that she had kept. Our artist worked that glass into the stained glass of our entrance. Mrs. Bernik covered the cost of all of our “stained glass” endeavors.

One of our offices in the administrative wing was purchased by the Dinkins family and placed in honor of Maxie Lowe. Maxie was one of the outstanding leaders of the first half of the 20th century of our church. His biography and pictures are in the room on the wall. In our chapel one can be surprised to see an actual theological mistake in one of the stained glass windows. I will leave it up to you to locate it.

Our chapel has a beautiful small statue of an angel given by Mrs. Marsha Eisenmann. Marsha has also given us the knitted picture honoring our veterans. This is placed in the hallway leading to the dining area of our Friendship Hall. Many have placed pictures of their loved ones that are presently serving our country in the armed forces.

The Stephen Ministries came to our congregation in 2013 and continue to expand. We presently have four Stephen Leaders and fifteen Stephen Ministers. This program aids our pastoral ministry extremely well. Our four Stephen Leaders are: Liz Martynowski, Irene Brugh, Jane Peebles and Linda Hall.